

An Exhortation, to Consideration,

BEING A

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CHARGE

DELIVERED AT THE
ORDINATION

OF

The Rev. PETER FEAST,

At YORK, *December 29th, 1789.*

By S. BARNARD.

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H U L L:

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PRICE SIXPENCE.

To the Reader.

AS publishing the following Charge was a matter entirely unknown to me till after it was delivered ; and as it was delivered in an Extempore way ; I cannot be answerable for every sentence as it was then dropped, but shall endeavour to keep as close to the leading Ideas, or substance thereof, as my Memory and Limits will admit of.



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MCCCLXXV
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An Exhortation, &c.

SINCE that part of the work of this evening which is fallen to my Lot, is to give you, (my Brother) the Charge; who have at this time been ordained, or publickly set apart for the work of the Ministry: I shall endeavour to do it with all that plainness and simplicity which the subject requires, not only for the benefit of you, but of those also who are now met together on this solemn occasion.

For which purpose, I have made choice of the words of the apostle Paul to Timothy:

2 Timothy ii. 7.

Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.—which words contain;

I. An exhortation, *Consider what I say;*

II. A prayer, *The Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

First let us attend to the *Exhortation*—and under this Head, (my Brother) I wish to say something to you concerning *doctrinal*, *experimental* and *practical* preaching, which three ideas include in them I apprehend; the great-

est part of the work of a Minister, in addressing his hearers in the pulpit from time to time, and neither of them can be omitted I think, with success to himself, and profit to the people amongst whom he labors.

Since this is the case, permit me to address you on,—

I. THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

As to a plurality of persons in the Godhead, you may easily prove by such passages as the following.—Let us make Man in our own image, after our likeness. * Where *us* and *our* express a plurality of persons; while the words *Image* and *likeness*, secure the unity of the divine essence. The Lord God said, behold! the Man is become as *one of us*, to know good and evil. †—Go to, let *us* go down and confound their language. ‡—Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*? §—I and my Father are *one*. ||—But as it is a *Trinity of persons* in the unity of the divine essence, with which I have more immediately to do; permit me to point out to you, a few of those passages of Scripture, which may be of use in defending this doctrine; where all the Three persons are distinctly mentioned.—The first passage I shall recommend to your considera-

* Gen. i. 26. † Gen. iii. 22. ‡ Gen. xi. 7. § Isa. vi. 8.

|| John x. 30.

tion, reads as follows : And I will pray the *Father*, and he shall give you another *comforter*. * Here is *God the Father* prayed unto ; by *God the Son* in human nature ; for another *comforter* ; even the spirit of truth, distinct from the *Father* and the *Son*. This truth is set forth by the apostle Paul, who says, because ye are sons, *God* hath sent forth the *Spirit* of his *Son* into your hearts, crying Abba *Father*, † in which passage the *Father* is spoken of as distinct from the *Son* and the *Son* from the *Father*, and the *Spirit* from both. We have the same truth exhibited to our view, by him in what follows. But after that, the kindness and love of *God our Saviour* (viz. the *Father*) toward man appeared ; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us ; by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the *holy Ghost* : which he (the *Father*) shed on us abundantly, through *Jesus Christ our Saviour*. § In which passage, all the Three persons are distinctly mentioned : as they are also, by the apostle Peter where he says, Elect according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit* unto obedience ; and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ* : || Beside, permit me to remark

* John xiv. 16. 26. † Gal. iv. 6. § Titus iii. 4, 5, 6. || 1 Pet. i. 2.
sec. 2. Thes. ii. 13, 14.

also,

also, that the ordinance of baptism is ordered by Christ to be administered; in the name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *holy Ghost*. * And we are told by the apostle John; there are Three that bear record in Heaven, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *holy Ghost*; and these Three are *one*. † Where a Trinity of persons, in the unity of the divine essence, are particularly pointed out: I shall therefore conclude this point of doctrine, in the benedictory prayer of the apostle; The grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *holy Ghost*, be with you all, ‡ in which passage, all the Three persons are distinctly mentioned again.

Permit me now (my Brother) to drop a few remarks for your consideration on,—

2. THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

It is a point which you may easily establish, if you attend to the word of God. The prophet Isaiah when speaking of *Christ* informs us, that his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD. § which plainly proves that Christ is God; unless we can suppose the prophet called him by a wrong name.—But you may observe also that Thomas testifies the same truth; where he calls him, *My Lord, and My GOD*. || The apostle

* Matt. xxviii. 19. † 1 John v. 7. ‡ 2 Cor. xiii. 14. § Isai. ix. 6.
|| John xx. 28.

Paul seems to be of the same opinion, for he declares Christ to be over all, GOD blessed for ever: * he stiles him also the KING of Kings, and the LORD of Lords, † and in his Epistle to Titus, calls him the *Great GOD*, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: ‡ where it is very evident that our Saviour Jesus Christ is the *Great God*. You may find the same truth established also, by the apostle John, who says when speaking of *Christ*; this is the *true GOD* and eternal life. § It was this *true God* that made all *things*, visible and invisible. || It was this *true God*, who *forgave sins*. ¶ It is in this *true God*, men are encouraged to *believe*; ye believe in God, believe also in me. ** and though blessed is the man who trusteth in the *Lord*; †† yet cursed is the man that trusteth in *man*, and maketh *flesh* his arm: ‡‡ which is the awful state and condition of all those who trust in Christ, if he be not God.

That the *holy Ghost* is God, appears from what Peter said to Ananias, by whom we are informed that lying unto the holy Ghost is lying unto *GOD*. §§ Hence we find that petitions are sometimes directed to one, and

* Rom. ix. 5. † 1 Tim. vi. 15. ‡ Tit. ii. 13. § 1 John v. 20.

|| John i. 3, and Col. i. 16. ¶ Mark ii. 7, 9, 10. ** John xiv. 1.

†† Jer. xvii. 7. ‡‡ Jer. xvii. 5. §§ Acts v. 3, 4.

sometimes

sometimes to another. Sometimes to God the *Father*, the first person; For this cause I bow my knee unto the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ. * Sometimes to *Christ* the second person, thus Stephen prayed in his dying moments, *Lord Jesus*, receive my spirit: as did also the *thief* upon the cross, who said *Lord* remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom. † Now if Christ be not God, both these men were guilty of the sin of Idolatry. Sometimes prayer is directed to the Lord the *Spirit*, the third person, as where the apostle prays, The Lord (viz. the spirit) direct your hearts, into the love of God, (the Father) and into the patient waiting for *Christ*. § And sometimes to all three persons together. ||

But I must hasten now to lay before you for your consideration, a few thoughts on,—

3. THE FALL OF MAN, and its effects.

Here (my Brother) you will find it necessary, to insist on the *imputation* of Adam's sin, to all his posterity, through his being their head and representative. This you may do, from the apostle's words, where he tells us, that by *one man's* disobedience; many were made *sinners*, ¶ (viz. by imputation)

* Eph. iii. 14. † Acts vii. 59. Luke xxiii. 42. § 2 Thes. iii. 5.

|| Rev. i. 4, 5. ¶ Rom. v. 19.

and who these *many* are, he informs us, saying, by the offence of one; (or by one offence) judgment came upon *all men*, to condemnation, * and again as by *one man*, sin entered into the world, and *death by sin*, and so death passed upon *all men*, for that (or in whom) *all* have sinned, † thus you may prove that *in Adam all die*. ‡

But you will find it necessary also to shew, that we come into the world with a *corrupt nature*, for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? § of this corruption of nature David complains saying, I was shapen in *iniquity*, and in *sin* did my mother conceive me. || We are informed also, that the heart is *deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*. ¶ And that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man, is *only evil* continually. ** His *understanding* is dark, his *will* is perverse, his *conscience* is defiled, and his *affections* alienated from God. And it is by this corruption of nature, we are led into open and repeated acts of rebellion against God.

Permit me in the next place to present for your consideration a few thoughts on,—

4. THE RECOVERY BY CHRIST.

* Rom. v. 18. † Rom. v. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 22. § Job. xiv; 4.

|| Psal. li. 5. ¶ Jer. xvii. 9. ** Gen. vi. 5.

And here, (my Brother) it will be necessary for you, to direct the thoughts of your hearers to the source whence all their mercies flow ; I mean, *the sovereign love of God*. The love of *the Father* appears towards his people in the gift of his Son *to*, and *for* them ; * in chusing them in him before the foundation of the world ; † and in blessing them in him with all spiritual blessings so early ; ‡ as does also the love of *the Son*, by engaging in the covenant of grace to become their *surety* ; § and promising to do the will of God ; || in assuming their nature, fulfilling the law, and dying to suffer its penalty, in their room and stead. The love of the spirit likewise appears in *convincing* them of sin, ¶ in leading them from self to Christ for *pardon, righteousness, and eternal life* ; ** in *witnessing* with their spirits that they are the children of God ; †† and in making them *meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. ‡‡

This *sovereign love* of God, fixed upon the *persons* of his people before all worlds without any regard to their *conduct* good or bad, and is always invariably the *same* towards them ; for we are told, he will *rest* in his

* John iii. 16. † Eph. i. 4. ‡ Eph. i. 3. § Heb. vii. 22. || Psal. xl. 7, 8.

¶ John xvi. 8. ** Col. i. 14. Rom. v. 19.—vi. 23. †† Rom. viii. 16.

‡‡ Col. i. 12.

love; * and that having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end; † viz. to the end of life,—to the end of time,—even to all eternity.

But here (my Brother) you will find it necessary to distinguish between the *persons* and the *conduct* of the people of God; for though he invariably loves their *persons*; yet their *sinful conduct*, is at all times hateful to him, an infinitely *pure* and *holy* God.

But I must hasten now to offer for your consideration, a few thoughts on,—

5. THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

And that there are such a people as the *Elect*, is evident from the following passages.—We are told, there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible; they shall deceive the very *Elect*; and also that Christ shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and shall gather together his *Elect*, ‡ and again it is said, shall not God avenge his own *Elect*, which cry day and night unto him? § The apostle Paul when writing to the Romans says, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's *Elect*; || and when writing to the Thessalonians he says,

* Jer. xxxi. 3. Zeph. iii. 17. † John xiii. 1. ‡ Matt. xxiv. 24, 31.

§ Luke xviii. 7. || Rom. viii. 33.

knowing

knowing Brethren beloved, your *election* of God. * He tells us also in another place, I endure all things for the *Elect's* sake, † and when writing to Titus, speaks of the faith of God's *Elect*. The apostle Peter also addressed those to whom he wrote, as *Elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. ‡

That this is an *eternal*, and not a *time* act, appears from the apostle's words, where he informs us, God hath from the *beginning* chosen you to salvation; § which beginning he interprets by saying, he (God the Father) hath chosen us in *him* (viz. Christ) *before the foundation of the world*. || That this choice is of *particular persons*, appears by the word *us*, in the above passage, as also from what follows; The Lord knoweth them that are *HIS*. ¶—Ye have not chosen *me*, but I have chosen *you*. ** And we are told, that their *names* were written in the Lamb's book of life, before the foundation of the world. †† This choice is all of pure grace, and not on the foresight of faith, that being the fruit of it, for as many as were ordained to eternal life *believed*. ‡‡ Nor because of their *good works*, for the children being not yet born neither having done

* Thef. i. 4. † 2 Tim. ii. 10. ‡ Titus i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 2.

§ 2 Thef. ii. 13. || Eph. i. 4. ¶ 2 Tim. ii. 19. ** John xv. 16.

†† Rev. xvii. 8. ‡‡ Acts xiii. 48.

any *good* or *evil*, that the purpose of God according to *Election* might stand, not of works; but of him that calleth. *

I shall now proceed to lay before you a few thoughts relative to,—

6. THE DOCTRINE OF ADOPTION; which I would wish you well to consider. And here (my Brother) it will be necessary to remind you, that Adoption consists of *taking those into the relation of children, and treating them as such; who are not so by nature, or birth.* It is an act which must pass upon a *stranger*, and not upon one's own by birth; as the case of Moses testifies. † Now God's people were all by nature aliens, but by adopting grace, were by him considered as children and treated as such. You may observe also that adoption is an act of God's sovereign will; ‡ and therefore does *not* first take place on our *believing*; it is true indeed that the saints are all the children of God by *Faith* in Christ Jesus, § (viz. openly and manifestly) but then faith does not make them children, but is what makes them appear to be so; for it is not *Faith*, but *God*, that says, how shall I put thee among the *children*, || and again I will be a *Father* unto you, and ye shall be my

* Rom. ix. 11. † Exod. ii. 10. ‡ Eph. i. 5. § Gal. iii. 26.

|| Jer. iii. 19.

sons and daughters. * The use of faith is to receive the adoption; † which it could not do unless it existed before *Faith* was given. In short the act of adoption is previous to any *work of the spirit* in the hearts of God's people, for there is no propriety in supposing those are made sons by adoption, who are so by birth; for no man ever adopted his own son, and though the persons who are regenerated were adopted, yet they were not adopted as regenerate; but when they were in a state of alienation from God: in which state all men are by nature, as the descendants of an apostate head. Therefore says the apostle, because ye are *sons*, (viz. by adoption) God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts; crying Abba Father; ‡ where you may observe, the spirit was not sent into their hearts to make God their Father, but to enable them by faith to call him so, by witnessing to their spirits that they were the children of God, § hence he is called the *spirit of adoption*, and we are told that as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the (adopted) sons of God; || not that being led by the spirit makes them *sons*, but is what makes them appear to be so.—But here I would observe

* 2 Cor. vi. 18. † Gal. iv. 5. ‡ Gal. iv. 6. § Rom. viii. 16.

|| Rom. viii. 14.

(my Brother) that though adoption *constitutes relation*, it does not convey *likeness* of image, nature and disposition, for these are produced in the work of regeneration; but then no man is adopted because he is regenerated, but regenerated because he is adopted, hence you may observe that adoption by no means supersedes, or sets aside the necessity of *regeneration*, for there is as much need of a *meetness* for heaven, as a *title* to it; therefore said our Lord, *ye must be born again*, and Paul tells us, if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his, * viz. openly or manifestly, for he could not mean, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is not *loved* of the Father, *adopted* into his family, chosen *in* Christ and redeemed *by* him: for there was a time when the spirit of Christ was not in Paul; † but there never was a time in which he was not blessed in Christ Jesus with all the above-mentioned spiritual blessings, because he was one *loved* with an everlasting love, ‡ predestinated to the *adoption* of a Son, § chosen *in* Christ before the foundation of the world, || and by virtue of the promise which Christ gave to his Father in the covenant of grace, ¶ he was delivered from the hand of

* Rom. viii. 9. † Acts xxvi. 11. ‡ Jer. xxxi. 3. § Eph. i. 5.

|| Eph. i. 4. ¶ Heb. x. 7.

justice, the curse of the law, and wrath to come. By this act of adoption, God's people are intitled to certain privileges; for if children then *heirs*. * There is provision made for their education, they shall be all *taught* of God: their *food*, is the sincere milk of the word, and the bread of life, which is Christ himself; their *cloathing* is the *best robe* the righteousness of Christ compared to wrought gold and raiment of needle-work; for their *protection* they have *God*, who is a wall of fire round about them; and the *inheritance* of which they are heirs, is among the saints in light, incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, but is reserved for them. God's people considered as children by *adoption*, were the subjects of redemption; hence those who were sometime afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. † It was therefore expedient that Christ should die for the people, and gather together in one the *children of God* that were scattered abroad, ‡—Forasmuch then as the *children* (viz. by adopting grace) are partakers of flesh and blood, he also (Christ) himself likewise took part of the same, § and though the nature he assumed was common to all mankind, yet he assumed it with a particular view to the *children of God*,

* Rom. viii. 17. † Eph. ii. 13. ‡ John xi. 50, 52. § Heb. ii. 14.

therefore

therefore they were not redeemed as saints, but as sinners; not as children by regeneration, but as sons by adoption; and of them as such Christ will at last say, behold I, and the *children* which God hath given me. *

But permit me now to proceed, and drop a few hints for your consideration on,—

7. THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.

With respect to the *term* itself, it stands opposed in the word of God to *condemnation*; so that a person who is justified is not condemned, and a person who is condemned is not justified.—But even here you will find it necessary to distinguish between the *act itself*, and the *manifestation* of it to the believer; for without some such distinction you can never fail of embarrassing the minds of your hearers. The *matter* of a sinner's justification *before God*, is the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his active and passive obedience, therefore we are told, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous; † and the way by which they are so made righteous, is by the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness to them, in which they stand *justified*, or freed from condemnation *before God*; so that blessed is the man, unto whom God *imputeth* righteousness. ‡

The persons who are thus justified are all

* Heb. ii. 13. † Rom. v. 19. ‡ Rom. iv. 6.

the *elect* of God, therefore says the apostle Paul, who shall lay any thing to the charge of *God's elect*, * mind, he does not say of *God's called ones*, but of *God's elect*; and if nothing can be laid to their charge, then all the *elect* must be justified in *his sight*. Again the same apostle, in the first verse of the same chapter tells us; there is therefore now no *condemnation* to them who are in *Christ Jesus*; and if so, all who are in *Christ Jesus* must be justified before God. It is true the apostle when showing how those who are in *Christ* may be known, informs us; they walk not after the *flesh*, but after the *spirit*; but be it remembered, their walking after the *spirit*, did not put them into *Christ*; but was what made them appear to be in him. We may observe again; the persons who are justified before God, are all the *redeemed* of the Lord; therefore the apostle informs us, we are justified freely by his grace, through the *redemption* that is in *Christ Jesus*; † and if the redemption which is in *Christ Jesus* be the *matter* of a sinner's justification before God; then all the *redeemed* are justified; and here (my Brother) we may observe, that justification is an act of God's free grace, (or free love and favor) towards us through (or in consideration of) the

* Rom. viii. 33. † Rom. iii. 24.

redemption that is in Christ Jesus ; so that you may see, the *act* of justification is perfectly compleat *with God*, without any *faith* on the sinner's part, and the reason why men are justified *before God*, is not because they believe, but they believe because they are justified ; therefore the apostle when giving a more *manifest* description of those who are justified, informs us, by HIM, *all that believe* are justified from all things ; * here we may observe that *by him*, viz. by Christ's blood and righteousness, sinners are justified *before God*, and faith makes it manifest and enables them to rejoice in it ; therefore altho' the apostle says, we conclude that a man is justified *by faith* : † it is no where said that *faith justifies him*, and whoever maintain that it does, or that a man is not justified *before God* till he believes, they invert the order of the Gospel, deify faith and rob God of his glory. But if faith be that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God, it must be either for the *act* performed by him, or the *grace* wrought in him ; it cannot be for the act performed by him ; for as such it is a work : nor for the grace wrought in him ; for as such it is a fruit of his sanctification, And here (my Brother) permit me to drop a word or two by way of *caution*, take

care that you do not blend justification and sanctification together ; the one consists of an *act* of God's free grace *towards us*, in consideration of the *redemption* which is in Christ Jesus : * and the other, of a work of grace (wrought by the spirit) *within us*, and is what God's people were chosen unto. † But again the Apostle informs us, that God the Father hath blessed his people with all *spiritual blessings* in Christ, and as *justification* is one of them ; that must be in Christ for them, to receive by faith out of his fulness ; but then though it is said that faith is the evidence of things *not seen* ; ‡ it is no where said to be the evidence of things *not in being* ; but is that grace by which we receive blessings from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation.

Beside, (my Brother) the office capacity of Christ as a *surety*, will help us much in this matter : for justice could not *detain the prisoners* a moment, after the Father had accepted the promise given by Christ our surety in the covenant of grace ; § any more than you could be *detained a prisoner*, after your creditor had accepted my bond, for the payment of your debt at some future period of time : for in that case, your debt would become mine, and you

* Rom. iii. 24. † 2 Thef. ii. 13. ‡ Heb. xi. 1. § Heb. x. 9.

discharged

discharged of course the moment my bond was accepted by your creditor. The application is easy.—But after all that can be said on this head, you may meet with some who will insist upon it, that no man is justified *before God* till he *believes* ; for (say they) he that believeth not is condemned already. * But this passage cannot refer to the condemnation of God's people *before him*, because in that sense there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ, nor can any thing be laid to their charge. † But however let them have the matter thus stated, and let them take the consequence of the same.—If a man be not justified before God *till he believes*, he is till then *condemned* before God. And if condemned, all his sins stand charged before God ; sin and condemnation being inseparably connected : now if a man's sins stand charged and he condemned before God, how are these to be removed ? Here (my Brother) such will be under the necessity of discovering their principles, by saying, “ *it is FAITH that removes condemnation, or justifies us before God,*” contrary to what the Apostle says, for he (Christ) hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself : ‡ and we are said to be justified freely by his *grace*, through the redemption which

* John iii. 18. † Rom. viii. 33. ‡ Heb. ix. 26.

is in Christ Jesus. * Beside, we are told it is God that justifies, not faith, and as to those passages which speak of justification *by* or *thro'* *faith*, cannot refer to the *being* of it, but to the *knowledge* and *enjoyment* of it. Some indeed will bring as an objection the apostle's words whom he *called*, them he also *justified*; † but it is well known that the order of words in scripture, do not always express the order of things, but however, that a man is not justified, or freed from condemnation in his *own conscience* till after he is called, is *granted*; but that he is not till then justified before God, must be *denied*, for he was not justified because he was called, but called because he was justified, Therefore though God's people are justified in his sight *before faith*, because justified as *elect*, as persons *in Christ*, and redeemed *by him*; yet they are not *manifestly* or *declaratively* justified, nor freed from condemnation in their *own consciences* till they believe, for not till then, is the conscience purged from dead works, by the blood of Christ, to serve the living God. ‡ You may meet with some perhaps, who in order to throw a little dirt (as they think) on what they cannot disprove will cry out, “ *eternal justification is eternal nonsense*, you may as well say we are eternally

* Rom. iii. 24. † Rom. viii. 30. ‡ Heb. ix. 14.

sanctified." But what does this prove? either, powerful *prejudice* against, or pitiful *ignorance* of the nature of that doctrine which they mean to oppose, not being able to distinguish between a sovereign act of grace (or love and favor) *towards us*, and a work of grace, (wrought by the spirit of God) *within us*: but if all that Adam represents, be condemned *before God* by his *disobedience*; all that Christ represents, must be justified before God by his *obedience*; * the promise of which, † was as efficacious for that purpose, as the act performed by him; or else none could have been justified, till the coming of Christ in the flesh. And as to that expression "*we are justified in the PURPOSE of God*"; is to me, unmeaning and unscriptural; for though God's people are said to be *called* according to his purpose; ‡ they are no where in his word said to be justified *before him* according to his purpose: and where-ever justification is spoken of in the *future* tense, § it refers not to the *act* itself, but to the *manifestation* of it in the conscience of the believer, at which time he *glories*, or rejoices saying; in the Lord have I *righteousness* and strength.

You will find it necessary (my Brother) to make the same distinction in speaking on the

* Rom. v. 19. † Heb. x. 9. ‡ Rom. viii. 28. § Isai. lxx. 25.

subject of PARDON, for surely it is one thing for a king to pardon a criminal, and another thing for him to make it known to the criminal, the act itself (pardon) must precede the knowledge of it: so also it is one thing for Christ to put away sin *from before God*, by the sacrifice of himself; and another thing for a man to have it manifested to him by the spirit of God, but here also the *act* must precede the manifestation of it.

Having thus laid the foundation, I shall now proceed to drop for your consideration, a few thoughts on *experimental* preaching.

And here (my Brother) you will be naturally led to speak on the subject of REGENERATION, as a *fruit*, or manifestation of a *previous union* to Christ. This truth you may easily make appear, from the joint declaration of the apostles Paul and Jude; the former tells the Ephesians, that they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; * and the latter addresses a people who were sanctified (or set apart) by God the father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called, † in consequence thereof. Here you may observe, they were not first called and then put into Christ, but were first in Christ and then called, ‡ That there must be a union with Christ before

* Eph. i. 4. † Jude i. 1. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

calling, is evident from another consideration also; which is, because the scripture speaks of *no grafting into Christ*, for by the olive-tree mentioned in Romans xith; is meant not *Christ* but the *Church of God*, as is obvious to all who read the 17th. verse of that chapter, where the apostle speaks of being grafted in *among them*, and not into Christ: Again we are told, that *grace* was given us in Christ, before the world began; * and that of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace: † but how a man can receive grace, or any spiritual blessing out of a fulness, with which he has no previous connection, cannot easily be shown. Beside every *called*, or regenerate man, has communicated to him all the graces of the spirit; and if so, he has *faith* among the rest; now faith is called a *fruit*: ‡ but it would be absurd, to suppose a branch capable of bearing fruit, without a previous connection, or union with the vine; especially since our Lord tells us, without me, (or severed from me) ye can do nothing. § From hence then we may observe, that regeneration is not that which *makes* the union between Christ and his people; but is what makes it manifest, just as the fruit manifests a connection between the branches and the vine.—Now regeneration

* 2 Tim. i. 9. † John i. 16. ‡ Gal. v. 22. § John xv. 5.

you know, does not consist of a life of morality, of being taught to repeat a form of sound words, or of being joined to this or that sect or party ; nor does it consist of turning from one profession to another, nor indeed, of any external performance whatsoever : but of being created anew in Christ Jesus, and renewed in the spirit of our minds.

The necessity of regeneration appears, not only from our Lord's words, *ye must be born again* ; but also from man's unfitness for heaven, while in a state of nature, he being wholly under the influence of a carnal mind, which is *enmity* against God ; and which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. * You will from hence be led to set forth, man's utter inability to help, or save himself, or to do any thing spiritually good ; without the grace of God, which you may prove from such passages as the following. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good, (spiritually) that are accustomed to do evil. † Turn thou me, and I shall be turned. ‡ It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure. § O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in *me* is thine

* Rom. viii. 7. † Jer. xiii. 23. ‡ Jer. xxxi. 18.

§ Phil. ii. 13.

help. * No man (saith Christ) can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him. † Therefore Paul freely confesses (what every christian is brought to confess ; viz.) what I am, I am by the grace of God. ‡ Hence appears the absolute necessity of the *work of the spirit* in the heart ; for none but God can quicken the dead, therefore says the apostle, you hath *be* quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. § Here it is, that experimental religion begins, from hence it is, the sinner begins to see his state, feel his guilt, cry for mercy, and cannot rest without a knowledge of God's forgiving love to his soul. It is the same spirit, that leads from self, to rest by faith on Christ, for pardon, righteousness and eternal life : that takes of the things of Christ, and shows the sinner his interest therein ; that witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God ; and that will guide him by his counsel here, and after that receive him to glory. Thus will you be naturally led, to that soul supporting Doctrine,

The final PERSEVERANCE of the SAINTS ; which you (my Brother) may establish, from the atonement of Christ, the nature of the life given by Christ ; (which is eternal) the christian's union to Christ ; and his having

* Hosea xiii. 9. † John vi. 44. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 10. § Eph. ii. 1.

the spirit, as the earnest of his inheritance ; as also by the promises of God ; who says, they shall *never perish*, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. I know indeed that it is said by some, “ they may pluck themselves out,” but if so, they must perish, and Christ says they never shall ; for the water that I shall give them, *shall be in them*, a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.—Because I live, ye shall live also. Where I am, there shall also my servant be : for he that hath begun a good work in you, will *perform* it, until the day of Jesus Christ. You will find it necessary also, frequently to speak of the temptations of Satan ; who is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ; of the corruptions of the heart, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked ; and to warn the careless and unruly of their danger, living and dying in sin ; assuring them that without *holiness*, no man can see the Lord : *. But that whosoever cometh to Christ, he will in no wise cast out.

But I must now hasten to lay before you, a few thoughts on *practical* preaching.

And here (my Brother) under this head you will find it necessary to point out, how grace in the heart, manifests itself in the life

* Heb. xii. 14.

and conversation of the possessor thereof.—As every Christian is made a partaker of the *divine nature*, or a principle of grace ; he is led thereby to *hate sin* of every kind ; this hatred against sin, is manifested by his turning from it, for he is taught to deny all ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. * Here we may remark, that conversion is the *fruit* of regeneration ; and without the latter, the former cannot be real and lasting ; for it is not likely that a man should turn from what he loves, or make choice of that which his mind is averse to. But the love of God, being shed abroad in the christian's heart, by the holy ghost which is given unto him ; he is led to love God ; and the reality of his love will be manifested by his attending on the word preached at every opportunity ; for you will not find such a man, one day at a place of worship, and another day at a ball, assembly, or playhouse, but going steadily on in the ways of God. And as the scriptures testify of Christ ; the christian manifests his love to their author, by searching them at every opportunity, and finds them at times sweeter to his taste, than honey to his mouth. This principle of grace leads him to love his

* Titus ii. 12.

brother also, for if a man say I love God, and hateth his brother he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? * In short, he is led by it to do good to all men; but especially to them who are of the household of faith. For one end that God has in view, in creating his people anew is, that they might perform good works; for says the apostle, we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; which God hath before ordained; that we should walk in them. † Hence it is, that such become *doers* of the word and not hearers only; deceiving their own souls, knowing that faith without works is dead: and thus being made free from sin, and become servants to God: they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. ‡

We are come now to consider,—

II. The import of the prayer; *the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

May you understand more clearly the *word of God*, that you may preach it faithfully and boldly, not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, nor handling the word of God deceitfully: for which purpose, study well your subjects, and compare your ideas with

* 1 John iv. 20. † Eph. ii. 10. ‡ Rom. vi. 22.

the written word, before you deliver them to your hearers : that your message may be ; "*thus saith the Lord*:"—May you understand how to preach the truths of the gospel *consistently*, and without confusion, that you may not contradict in one part of your sermons, what you advance in another ; for which purpose keep in your preaching, the *law* and the *gospel* distinct, for by the one is the *knowledge* of sin, and in the other, is contained a *remedy* against it, remembering also, to keep in view the apostle's declaration : by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God, not of works least any man should boast. *—May the Lord give you more clearly to understand the *work of the spirit* in your own heart, that you may preach feelingly and experimentally, and may you have the tongue of the learned given you, that you may know how to speak a word in season, to him that is weary.—May the Lord give you to understand *communion* with himself, for without this, your soul will be barren, and your labors a task to yourself, if not unprofitable to your hearers.

You will find it necessary, (my Brother) to pray much for yourself and for the success of the gospel ; knowing that the best

* Eph. ii. 8, 9.

studied sermons that can be delivered ; are no farther useful, than they are made so by the spirit of God ; for neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth : but God that giveth the increase. *—May the Lord give you to understand how to *live the gospel* ; for remember (my Brother) that the eyes of the world are upon you ; as are also the eyes of professors, who, however full of sin their own *conduct* may be, will pass by none unnoticed in the conduct of their ministers. Remember therefore, a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. † In order then that what you deliver from time to time, may have the more weight with your hearers ; be circumspect, giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed ; study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

May you walk humbly with your God, who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy : to whom be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen.

* 1 Cor. iii. 7. † Matt. v. 14.



THE END.